

NPL Site Narrative for Commencement Bay, South Tacoma Channel

COMMENCEMENT BAY, SOUTH TACOMA CHANNEL Tacoma, Washington

Conditions at listing (October 1981): The Commencement Bay, South Tacoma Channel Site covers 2.5 square miles in Tacoma, Washington. It has been an industrial center for more than 100 years. It includes the South Tacoma Swamp, the American Surplus Sales Co. site, and the Tacoma Municipal Landfill. Wells supplying drinking water to Tacoma are contaminated with chlorinated organic chemicals.

This is one of two Commencement Bay sites. They were considered one site when they were first listed.

Status (July 1983): On March 24, 1982, a fire occurred at American Surplus. Using \$125,000 in CERCLA emergency funds, EPA cleaned up the site, removing 645 drums of flammable solvents and other chemical wastes, as well as 400 cubic yards of debris. In April 1982, EPA signed a \$100,000 Superfund State Contract with Washington to gather information for planning future remedial action in the South Tacoma Swamp. The work is scheduled to be completed in the third quarter of 1983. In April 1982, EPA signed a \$228,000 Superfund State Contract for a remedial investigation of municipal Wells 12A and 9A to determine the extent and type of contamination and the feasibility study to identify alternatives for remedial action. In March 1983, EPA authorized \$1.3 million for construction of five aeration towers to remove organic solvents from Well 12A. The towers, which are essentially complete, improve the quality of the ground water so that it can be used for public drinking water or discharged to Commencement Bay. Pumping and treating Well 12A protects the remaining 12 wells in the field from contamination.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.